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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 003025

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STATE FOR EUR/ERA AND EUR/AGS - SAINT-ANDRE

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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO AUSTRIA IN ADVANCE OF THE OCTOBER
16-17 EU FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC)

REF: STATE 170214

Classified By: Economic-Political Counselor Gregory E. Phillips. Reason: 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (SBU) EconPolCouns delivered reftel demarche on October 11 to Andreas Riecken, the Austrian MFA's European Correspondent.

2. (C) Riecken made the following substantive comments on reftel points:

-- Sudan: Riecken said there was broad agreement between the EU and US on Sudan. He noted that European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso had led a team consisting of approximately half of the Commission to visit Sudan. Barroso had been unsuccessful in convincing Sudanese President Omar al Bashir to accept the transition from an African Union force to a UN force.

-- Kosovo/Serbia/Bosnia: There will be a discussion of Kosovo over lunch at the Luxembourg GAERC, and a discussion of Serbia and Bosnia during the plenary meeting, Riecken reported. Riecken noted that UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari had said he would delay presentation of his report until after the Serbian elections at the end of December. Riecken said there was some concern in the EU that Serbia might seek to delay elections until March, which would present much too long a timeframe to delay the report. Riecken said there was a clear sense that the Serbs would never agree to a Kosovo settlement, and there would soon come a point at which the international community would have to present Serbia with a fait accompli.

-- Middle East Peace Process: Riecken said there would be council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process. The EU agreed on the need to improve and expand the operation of border crossings.

-- Lebanon: UNIFIL was an extremely important mission for the EU, Riecken said. However, Austria will not participate, choosing to maintain its long-time deployment to the peacekeeping mission in the Golan Heights, he said. Riecken asked whether our point calling on EU member states to prevent use of their territory or airspace to undercut the arms embargo was in response to a failure of EU states to do this. He said discussion of language on an EU common action on the arms embargo was in progress. He added that he would be interested in knowing where there might be problems.

-- Iran: There is not much difference between the U.S. and EU positions, Riecken said. The ball is currently in the UN Security Council's court, he said. At this point, he added, "no one wants military sanctions," but it was hard to see

what a sanctions package would contain.

-- UNSC Seat for Guatemala: This is not on the agenda as a discussion item, Riecken said. (Note: The Austrians have told us previously that they will vote for Guatemala, having previously made a commitment of mutual support for their respective UNSC bids. End note.)

13. (C) Zimbabwe is also on the agenda, Riecken said. There had been a disagreement between EU member states that saw no new developments that would warrant a discussion and those who wanted to discuss the current state of play, and the latter prevailed. Riecken noted that a related issue -- although one which would probably not arise at the GAERC -- was the discomfort EU member states were feeling at the prospect of following through on their commitment to hold an EU-African Union Summit in Lisbon. Riecken said "no one" wants to hold a summit at which Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe would be present.
McCaw